

# Priority Area Kaizen: Agency FOIA process

## What

- EPA uses a decentralized model for processing FOIA requests that relies on a variety of different processes across the agency. Simultaneously, the number of FOIA requests [seeking electronic records] that involve more than one office or region has increased significantly in the last several years. This creates significant burden upon agency staff and resources, results in confusion, increases litigation risks, affects timeliness of initial interaction with and final response to requestors, and raises uncertainty regarding the application of FOIA across the agency.

## Performance Goal

- Meet statutory deadlines for responding to FOIA requests and appeals on 100% of such requests received by FY22.

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## Why

- Reduce the overall burden to EPA for processing FOIA requests
- Improve the quality and consistency of responses
- Limit agency exposure to lawsuits under FOIA
- Improve public satisfaction with EPA FOIA responses

## How

- Immediate next steps: research and conduct root-cause analysis on FOIA issues
- **By January 2018:** conduct an Agency-wide process improvement event to standardize the process for responding to FOIA
- **By April 2018:** develop standard work, process flow, definitions, and performance targets across all Regions
- **July 2018:** start to implement changes for new process